

LETTER

FROM THE

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TO THE

Chairman of the Committee on the Public Lands,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF

Clerk Hire,

ALLOWED TO

THE REGISTERS AND RECEIVERS

OF

THE LAND OFFICES.

FEBRUARY 10, 1824.

Referred to the Committee on the Public Lands.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON.

1824.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

3d March, 1823.

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 23d ult. I have the honor to enclose a report from the Comptroller of the Treasury, which contains the information required; and remain, with respect, your most obedient servant,

WM. H. CRAWFORD.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER RANKIN,

C. C. upon Public Lands.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Comptroller's Office, 1st March, 1823.

SIR: In reply to your endorsement on the letter of the Hon. Christopher Rankin, of the 23d inst., addressed to you, I have the honor to state, that no clerk hire has been allowed, by me, to any register or receiver of public moneys, except only where the duties, during the public sales, were greater than could be performed by those officers, when an allowance, not exceeding \$3 per day, has been made, for persons employed to assist them during the sales.

This allowance, thus made, has always been considered as an expense incidental to the public sales of land, where the labor is greater than can be performed by the register and receivers, and their regular clerks, and is not considered in the light of *clerk hire*, any more than the per diem allowance to criers, advertising sales, stationery, or any other *incidental expense* attending such sales, not specially provided for by law.

This will explain why this expense, or *kind* of clerk hire, is in the statement from the Register of the Treasury, included in the column containing, "Pay of Superintendants, Clerks, Auctioneers, &c. attending Public Sales;" and though, in the Register's statement, there is a separate column made for clerk hire allowed, yet there has been no other clerk hire allowed by me than such as has been stated, which is, in fact, a part of the incidental expenses necessarily attendant upon the sales of public lands.

It may not be improper to remark, that, although it appears, from a copy of the statement furnished by the Register, referred to in the letter of Mr. Rankin, that, since the 1st of April, 1818, there has been allowed, for clerk hire, superintendants, auctioneers, &c. the sum of \$7,202 67, yet, from as correct an examination of the land accounts, for the purpose of ascertaining the amounts, as the short time would permit, it appears that not one-fourth of that sum has been allowed for that kind of service denominated *clerk hire*, and which is the per diem allowance during the great sales, and no other, excepting the sum of \$666 66, (included in the said sum of \$7,202 67) allowed on account of clerk hire, authorized by the act of 3d March, 1819, at Jackson Court House, notwithstanding the Register's statement seems to shew two kinds of clerk hire.

With great respect,

JOS. ANDERSON, *Comptroller.*

To the Hon. WM. H. CRAWFORD,

Secretary of the Treasury.